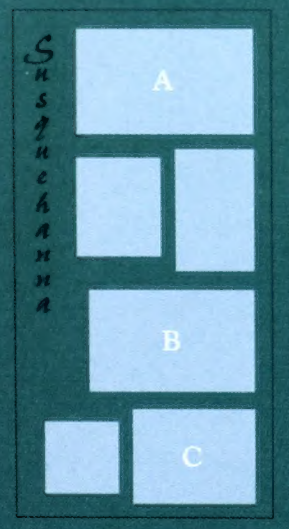
SRBC's Mission Statement

The mission of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, which is defined in the Compact, is to enhance public welfare through comprehensive planning, water supply allocation, and management of the water resources of the Susquehanna River Basin.

To accomplish this mission, the SRBC works to:

- reduce damages caused by floods;
- provide for the reasonable and sustained development and use of surface and ground water for municipal, agricultural, recreational, commercial and industrial purposes;
- protect and restore fisheries, wetlands and aquatic habitat;
- protect water quality and instream uses; and
- ensure future availability of flows to the Chesapeake Bay.

The SRBC is uniquely qualified to carry out this mission. As a federal-interstate compact commission, its focus is defined by the natural boundaries of the river basin rather than the political boundaries of the member states. As such, the SRBC serves as a forum to provide coordinated management, promote communication among the members, and resolve water resource issues and controversies within the basin.



COVER PHOTO IDENTIFICATIONS

Photo A
Chemung River in New York
© Denise Hoffer Whiting

Photo B
Conodoguinet Creek in Pennsylvania

Photo C
Susquehanna River in Maryland
© Barry Gorrell

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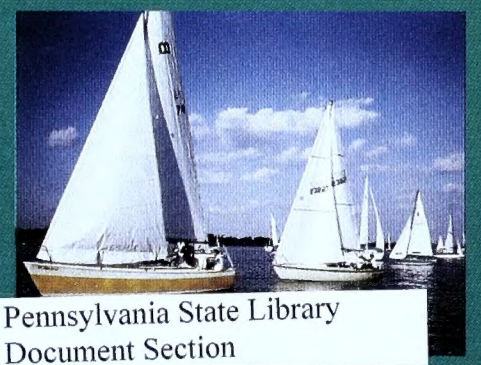

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River Basin Commission

Susquehanna River Basin

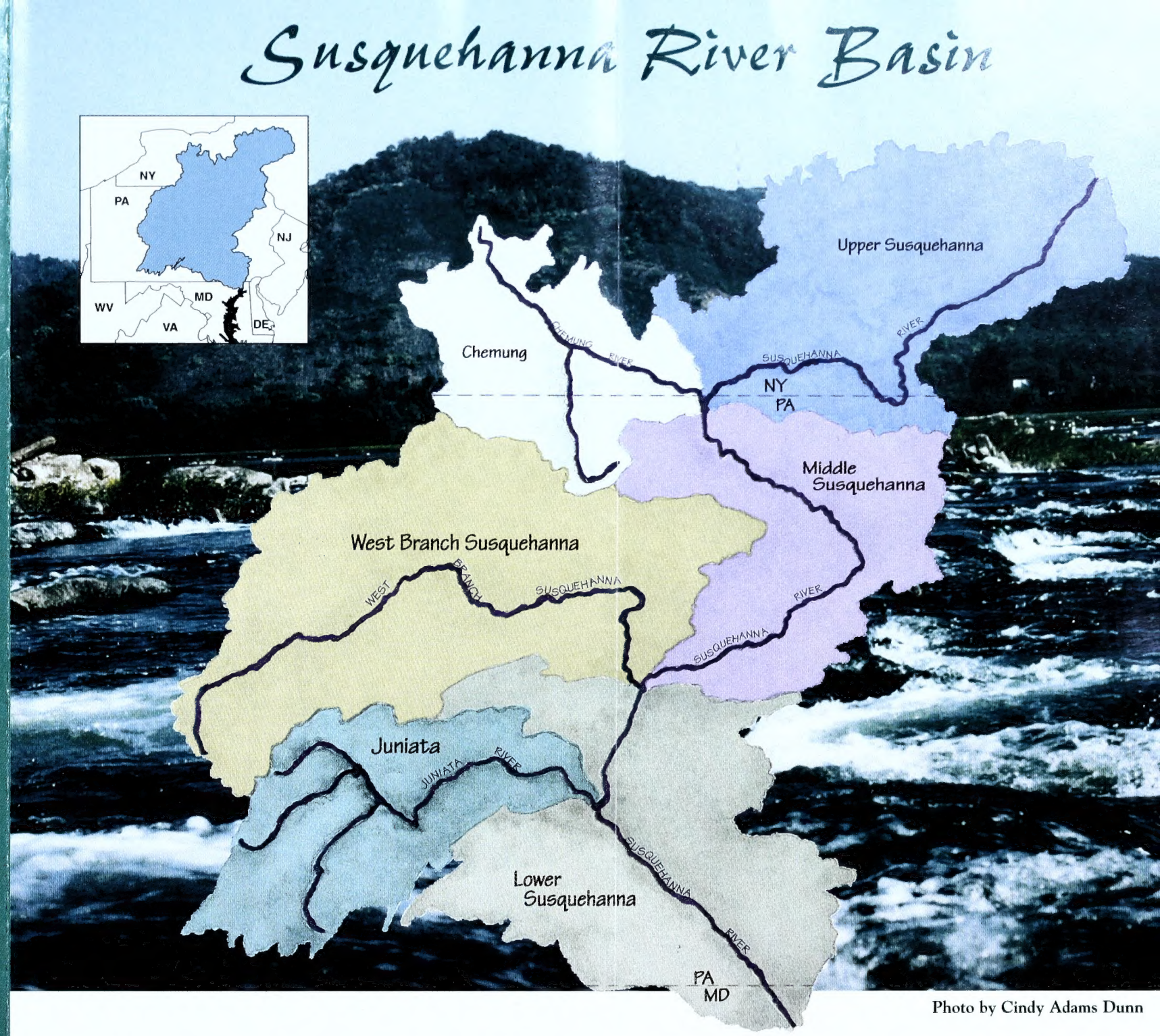

Photo by Cindy Adams Dunn

The Susquehanna River Basin

- drains a 27,510-square-mile area covering parts of the states of New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland;
- is comprised of six major subbasins and has more than 31,000 miles of streams;
- is comprised of more than 65 percent forestlands; and
- has a population of about 4.1 million residents.

The main stem Susquehanna River

is the nation's longest, commercially nonnavigable waterway. The river begins at a narrow outlet of Otsego Lake in Cooperstown, New York, and meanders 444 miles until it empties into the Chesapeake Bay at Havre de Grace, Maryland.

The Susquehanna River is the largest tributary to the Chesapeake Bay, supplying half of the bay's freshwater inflows—about 18 million gallons every minute.

A Watershed Agency

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) is a federal-interstate watershed agency. The law establishing SRBC is the Susquehanna River Basin Compact, which was signed on December 24, 1970 and went into effect 30 days later.

The compact joined the federal government and the states of New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland as equal partners for a 100-year period to manage the Susquehanna basin's water resources through proper planning, development and regulations.

As an interstate agency, SRBC manages the basin's water resources based on watershed boundaries, not political boundaries. This gives SRBC the unique ability to help resolve potential interstate water disputes.

SRBC Members

NY State Flower Beach Rose

As equal partners, the states of New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland and the federal government each appoint a commissioner to SRBC. The commissioners from the member states are appointed by their respective governors, and the federal commissioner and alternates are appointed by the President of the United States.

PA State Flower Mountain Laurel

The commissioners, or their designated alternates, meet periodically and make decisions on a variety of programmatic and administrative matters, including water withdrawal and consumptive uses, regulations, policies, budgets, contracts, planning, drought declarations and various resolutions.

MD State Flower Black-Eyed Susan

US Flower Rose

SRBC Staff

The members coordinate with the Commission's Executive Director and staff, who support the Commission's daily operations. SRBC's technical, public outreach and administrative staff are guided by the agency's comprehensive plan, strategic plan and mission statement. SRBC staff work to provide excellent service to the public and to be leaders in the conservation, utilization, allocation, development and management of water resources within the Susquehanna basin.

For detailed information on SRBC and its members, visit SRBC's website at http://www.srbc.net.

Protecting Your Watershed for Today and Tomorrow

Managing the Watershed

Coordination, Planning and Public Information

One of the important and required functions of SRBC is coordination. SRBC coordination activities include its work in: flood forecast and warning; flood plain management and protection; sediment management; debris management; migratory fish restoration; water-based recreation; greenways; and river trail management.

Various long-term and short-term planning documents guide SRBC activities, including: a comprehensive plan; Commissionwide and division strategic plans; an annual water resources program; and an annual budget and work plan.

To enhance the public's knowledge of the basin's water resources, SRBC produces publications, issues press releases, maintains a Speakers' Bureau and a website and does direct outreach to community-based organizations.

Watershed Monitoring and Assessment

SRBC is involved extensively in many monitoring and assessment projects. Activities under monitoring and assessment include: Chesapeake Bay Program monitoring; interstate streams monitoring; assessment of unassessed streams; and subbasin surveys. Much of the data SRBC collects and analyzes helps SRBC's members determine the effectiveness of their respective regulatory programs.

Watershed Restoration

Many of SRBC's restoration activities are site-specific, and can be short- or long-term efforts. Restoration projects include constructed wetlands and stream restoration such as streambank fencing and riparian buffer projects. SRBC also works with its members to establish total maximum daily loads for impaired stream reaches.

Watershed Protection

One of the primary responsibilities of SRBC is to review and approve water withdrawal and consumptive use applications under the Project Review program. This regulatory program affords SRBC a significant opportunity to protect the basin's water resources. Other major SRBC programs that protect water resources include: low flow management; reservoir feasibility studies; water resource monitoring; water withdrawal documentation; ground-water management; and source water assessment and protection.

Administration and Data Management

Administrative and data management functions are critical to SRBC's daily watershed management activities for effective internal and external communications and transfer of data. The primary SRBC activities in this category include: GIS mapping; flood stage forecast mapping and data repository; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 305(b) reporting; and Susquehanna River water quality trend analysis.